

Message Text

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ORIGIN SS-25

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T STATE 161185

EXDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, VN

SUBJECT: APPROACH TO DRV ON MIA'S

LONDON EYES ONLY FOR ASST. SECRETARY HABIB

1. SUMMARY. EMBASSY SHOULD REQUEST MEETING BETWEEN EMBASSY OFFICER AND DRV REPRESENTATIVE TO SEEK INFORMATION ON THE THREE US AIRMEN RECENTLY IDENTIFIED IN HANOI BROADCAST AND IN LETTER FROM PRG TO SENATOR KENNEDY AS HAVING DIED IN NORTH VIETNAM, AND ON MIA'S IN GENERAL. END SUMMARY.

2. BACKGROUND: ON APRIL 22, 1975, HANOI RADIO BROADCAST STATEMENT THAT "THE DRVN SERVICES RESPONSIBLE FOR FINDING INFORMATION ABOUT MIA'S" HAD INFORMED SENATOR EDWARD KENNEDY (D-MASS.) OF THREE AMERICANS WHO DIED WHEN THEIR PLANES WENT DOWN IN NORTH VIETNAM: LT. COMMANDER JESSE TAYLOR JR., USN; MAJ. CROSLY JAMES FITTON, USAF; AND CAPT. RONALD DWIGHT PERRY, USAF.

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ON SAME DATE SENATOR KENNEDY INFORMED DEPT. HE HAD RECEIVED LETTER ON OFFICIAL LETTERHEAD OF PERMANENT MISSION OF PROVISIONAL REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH VIETNAM IN FRANCE, SIGNED BY AMBASSADOR

PHAM VAN BA, WHICH ENDED WITH P.S. AS FOLLOWS: BEGIN
TEXT:

THE DRVN SIDE, UNDERSTAND THAT WE WOULD BE CONTACTING
YOU, ASKED ME TO CONVEY THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION
CONCERNING 3 AMERICAN PILOTS, AS FOLLOWS.

--TAYLOR JESSE, JR, BORN ON JANUARY 16, 1925,
MAJOR, 533662, PILOT OF AN A-1H. HE DIED ON
JANUARY 17, 1965, IN HAIPHONG.

--FITTON, CROSLEY JAMES, BORN ON FEBRUARY 28,
1933, MAJOR, 47853, F4 PILOT. HE DIED ON FEBRUARY
29, 1968, IN HA TAY.

--PERRY, RONALD DWIGHT, BORN ON SEPTEMBER 27,
1944, CAPTAIN, 412702403, B52G PILOT, DIED ON
DECEMBER 21, 1972, IN HA BAC. END TEXT. (SIC.)

(COPY OF LETTER POUCHED TO MARK PRATT, PARIS.)

3. THERE ARE MINOR ERRORS IN THIS INFORMATION AS BROAD-
CAST AND IN WRITTEN POSTSCRIPT. TAYLOR WAS NAVY LT.
COMMANDER, NOT "MAJOR", AND HIS DATE OF SHOOTDOWN WAS
NOVEMBER 17, 1965, NOT JANUARY 17. FITTON'S LAST NAME
IS SPELLED INCORRECTLY, AND HE WAS PILOT OF AN F-105.
PERRY'S LAST NAME IS SPELLED INCORRECTLY. END BACKGROUND.

4. EMBOFF SHOULD REQUEST MEETING WITH DRV REPRESENTATIVE
TO MAKE FOLLOWING POINTS.

A. RADIO HANOI CARRIED A REPORT ON APRIL 22 WHICH
CONFIRMED THAT THE FOLLOWING THREE U.S. PILOTS HAD
DIED IN NORTH VIETNAM:

---TAYLOR, JESSE, JR. - LT. COMMANDER

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---FITTON, CROSLEY JAMES - MAJOR

--- PERRY, RONALD DWIGHT - CAPTAIN.

B. THE USG REQUESTS CONFIRMATION FROM THE DRV OF
THIS INFORMATION ABOUT THESE THREE MEN.

C. THERE ARE MINOR ERRORS IN THIS INFORMATION WHICH
USG HAS CORRECTED AS FOLLOWS (EXPLAIN CORRECTIONS).
WE ASSUME THIS ACCORDS WITH DRV'S INFORMATION.

D. FAMILIES OF THESE MEN HAVE REQUESTED THAT THEIR
REMAINS BE RETURNED TO THE UNITED STATES FOR BURIAL

IN FAMILY GRAVES. THE USG IS PREPARED TO DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSPORTING THE BODIES OF THESE MEN FROM NORTH VIETNAM. THE USG IS PREPARED TO SEND AN AIRCRAFT TO HANOI TO ACCOMPLISH THIS. WE ARE ALSO PREPARED TO HAVE AN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION SUCH AS THE INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS OR THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES CARRY OUT THIS FUNCTION.

E. THERE ARE STILL A LARGE NUMBER OF AMERICAN MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO REMAIN UNACCOUNTED FOR IN VIETNAM. THE DRV HAS AN OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THE FATE OF THESE MEN AND TO RETURN THE BODIES OF THOSE MEN WHO HAVE DIED. THE USG REQUESTS THE DRV TO FULFILL THIS OBLIGATION.

F. IF DRV REP RAISES SUBJECT OF FOUR PARTY JOINT MILITARY TEAM (FPJMT) AS CHANNEL FOR MIA INFORMATION AND RETURN OF REMAINS, YOU SHOULD RAISE NO OBJECTION.

G. IF DRV REP TRIES TO LINK MIA QUESTION TO ARTICLE 21 OF PARIS AGREEMENT (REPARATIONS), TO U.S. TRADE EMBARGO, OR TO RETURN OF AIRCRAFT FLOWN FROM SOUTH VIETNAM, ALONG LINES OF JUNE 11 NHAN DHAN STATEMENT (ALSO POUCHED PRATT), YOU SHOULD STATE YOU ARE AUTHORIZED ONLY TO DISCUSS THE THREE OFFICERS NAMED ABOVE.

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